

Vocational Technical Education Partnership: **A Funding Initiative to Build a Statewide System for Alaskans**

Purpose:

The purpose of this funding Initiative is to implement a modern, statewide vocational technical education and training system. This system will ~~to~~ better prepare the current and future workforce for industry driven employment that sustains individuals and their dependents, and grows Alaska's economy. The result of the Initiative will be a coordinated workforce education and training system that prepares Alaskans to compete in the global, national and regional economy.

Need:

Alaska needs an investment of new funding~~money~~ in vocational and technical education in order to maximize existing programs and create new infrastructure such as regional learning centers that will result in a robust statewide system. ~~Right now,~~ Alaska has many innovative training opportunities and many quality training providers; that but they often work in isolation from each other. Isolated programs cannot address the needs of our diverse state and do not provide access for many Alaskans. As a result, Alaska is not providing the number of skilled workers needed for occupations vital to the economy and Alaskan people. The primary focus of ~~This~~-this Initiative is to ~~will~~ connect isolated programs by responding to industry identified needs and standards to create a system that will coordinate efforts to provide Alaska with a trained and qualified workforce. The Initiative works across and links all levels of public and private vocational and technical education. Credits, certificates, certifications, and degrees should be ~~provided~~ accessible and they should be transportable among schools, colleges, and industries across Alaska and the nation.

Statewide System Results

With ~~sufficient~~ adequate resources, a statewide system will achieve the following results:

- Sufficient infrastructure to sustain a quality statewide system
- Working, collaborative partnerships and practices that involve all stakeholders
- Increased supply of qualified workers for Alaska's key industries
- Greater access for rural students to quality vocational and technical training
- Seamless pathways to excellent careers
- Increased number of high school students choosing careers in Alaska's priority job fields:
- An aligned system that moves Alaskans forward in their education and careers, without having to repeat standards-based learning
- More highly qualified vocational and technical educators
- Shared effective practices and avoidance of unnecessary duplication
- Centers of excellence across the state that deliver on regional employer needs
- Alaskans to fill Alaskan jobs

Background

On January 10, 2003 vocational technical education and career training providers and education advocates met, formed the Vocational Technical Education Providers (VTEP) working group, and agreed to commit their organizations to implement the guiding principles of the "Alaska's

Future Workforce Strategic Policies and Investment Blueprint” (the Blueprint). In May 2003, VTEP members created and signed a Memorandum of Agreement that outlines the need for a coordinated system; each member committed to working toward such a system. The Vocational Technical Education Partnership (VTEP) Fund Initiative is a crucial step in this commitment.

The Vocational Technical Education Partnership Funding Initiative

The VTEP Funding Initiative will support a public-private partnership collaboratively implementing that is responsible for recommending system for for VTEP Fund initiative resource distribution for vocational technical education. Guided by the Blueprint, the VTEP will collaborate to sustain, improve, and develop quality programs within the state, building the structural framework necessary to align training to industry standards and to use current funds more efficiently.

In order to leverage both public and private funds, the VTEP members recommend establishing the VTEP Partnership as a separate 501 (c) 3 non-profit corporation. ~~The advantages of a non-profit include insulation from political fluctuations and the opportunity to pursue and receive private funding.~~

The Partnership will receive and allocate funds to implement develop a statewide system, investing in and connecting secondary education, postsecondary vocational technical education, colleges and universities, industry learning consortia, the registered apprenticeship system, and regional training/learning centers. The Partnership will:

- Distribute resources responsibly and coordinate oversight, evaluation and validation using the blueprint criteria of a needs driven, interconnective, collaboratively governed, accessible, accountable, sustainable vocational technical education system.
- Provide technical assistance to ensure that vocational technical education meets academic, accreditation, vocational and industry training standards, including instructor and course development and assessments, and other capacity building strategies;

~~Recommend criteria to distribute resources responsibly across the vocational technical education system;~~

~~Provide general leadership for vocational technical programs within the state system;~~

~~Provide recommendations to improve alignment of the vocational technical education system with Alaska economic and workforce needs and priorities.~~


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Membership and directors will represent a cross section of rural and urban Alaska, the regions of Alaska, employers, and educators, such as:

- Cross Membership to/from the Alaska Workforce Investment Board (AWIB)
- Secondary
 - Public, private 7-12
- Non-UA post-secondary institutions

- University of Alaska
- Registered Apprenticeship Training Providers
- Private Sector Training
- Industry Learning Consortia/ Workforce Intermediaries
- Regional Training/Learning Centers
- Alaska Native training, ~~employment~~ & education entities

Potential Fundable Activities:

- Statewide agreements across appropriate agencies that ensure Alaskans move through the education and training system without having to repeat learning
- Capacity to integrate agreed upon academic  industry-based standards
- Distance delivery and mobilization of key programs
- Local delivery of on-demand training to fill specific employment needs
- Vocational education opportunities available (regionally) to all Alaskan high school students.
- Exposure and exploration vocational and technical career pathway activities at all secondary schools
- Transitional skills training to address obstacles that have resulted in underrepresented populations in the workforce

Criteria:

~~The following criteria along with subsequent assessments of effectiveness will determine allocation of funding:~~

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Needs Driven | <input type="checkbox"/> Accessible |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Interconnected | <input type="checkbox"/> Accountable |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Collaborative Governance | <input type="checkbox"/> Sustainable |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Quality Academic Delivery | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry Standards Based |

Accountability

While the VTEP ~~p~~Partnership maintains independent governance, it will align to the policies set by the AWIB and report results through the AWIB to the Governor, the Alaska Legislature, ~~and~~ the Congressional Delegation, and member organizations. Evidence will demonstrate that the VTEP ~~p~~Partnership meets criteria set in the Blueprint and the workforce development priorities set by industry. VTEP accountability does not supercede existing organizational accountability of individual members.

Statewide ~~Coordination~~ Alignment

The initiative is aligned with existing efforts in the state including, but not limited to: ~~Commonwealth North~~, the Blueprint, ~~University of Alaska Board of Regents Initiatives~~, Workforce Investment Act State Plan, ~~and~~ Perkins State Plan, and the recent Commonwealth North Study on workforce development.

VTEP's ~~Partnership's~~ relationship with the AWIB will ensure this continued alignment. VTEP will serve as an ad hoc committee to the AWIB and a additionally a director will additionally serve ~~A VTE Partnership director will sit as~~ sa member of the AWIB Workforce Readiness an ad-

~~hoca standing~~ committee ~~member on~~ ~~of the AWIB board~~, and an ~~An~~ AWIB member will ~~also~~ sit as a member on the VTE ~~P-Partnership~~ Board. Key state ~~officials~~ departments are represented on the AWIB ~~represent~~:

- ~~□ Alaska Department of Labor & Workforce Development;~~
- ~~□ Department of Education and Early Development~~
- ~~□ Department of Community and Economic Development~~
- ~~□ Commission on Postsecondary Education~~
- ~~□ Lieutenant Governor~~
- ~~□ Department of Health and Social Services~~
- ~~□ University of Alaska~~

~~???? do we need a sentence about federal coordination????~~

~~No~~

~~but a summary statement (the heart of what we're asking for in one or two sentences) would be good.~~